

## Pre-Listing Home Inspections

The mention of having a home inspection is almost always followed by, "Oh, so you're buying a home." In point of fact, home inspections are almost always performed for home buyers, not home sellers. Those who would choose to have an inspection performed prior to listing their home for sale remain in the minority. So are there advantages? Is it worth considering?

In over a decade of performing inspections, I have personally seen many, many home sellers blindsided by findings from an inspection report. Any experienced inspector will confirm the same. Often the issues are right under the homeowner's nose, but as is often the case, that which is right under our noses can be the most difficult to see. Having a professional inspection performed by an experienced, qualified and local inspector goes a long way to eliminate these surprises. Further, it can help a home seller deal with the disclosure statement, thus eliminating some of the, "I don't know", responses which may create suspicion with potential buyers.

Having a professional inspection prior to listing your home also conveys a message. It shows prospective buyers that you are up front, honest and don't want to sell a lemon. It says that you want anyone who buys your home to be able to proceed eyes wide open. A professional inspector will provide a top shelf, computer generated and printed report with digital pictures that you can leave for potential buyers to review as they tour your home. Nothing reinforces your message more than that.

Of course the down side is that the inspector may discover adverse conditions in your home. This is where the 70-20-10 rule comes into play. In other words, 70% of the inspection findings are about disclosure, description and boiler plate comments. 20% documents the mundane and necessary reporting about the home's condition, such as chipped sinks and so on. The last 10%, the important findings, can be divided into three categories: First are health and safety issues; Second are high dollar repairs; Third are conditions where costly hidden issues may exist. This is where you really need a professional Realtor to help you sort things out. They will know which items are worth spending money on and which are not. In the end, that professional advice can make the difference between spending money to make more money on the sale of your home - or just spending more money.

Larry Stamp

Larry owns and operates Cameo Home Inspection Services and teaches for the ASHI Washington Home Inspector School. He can be reached at 360-459-1632.